

THE NUR AFSHAN

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Editorial Notes.

The Annual meeting of the North India Conference of Christian workers was held at Mussoorie Sept. 17—25, followed by a Woman's Conference on the 26th. The program has already appeared in these columns. The papers read and the addresses given were exceedingly interesting and instructive. The subject of greatest interest was that of the Indian Church and its work of Evangelization. The conviction of the majority was that the Indian Church of the future would in all probability be different in organization from that of any existing body in India. It was especially cheering to see the growing independence of the Indian Christian Churches. The vast number of men and women, native to the soil, who engage in some form of voluntary labour for the extension of Christ's Kingdom was a source of much joy to all who were present at this Conference. The great hope of a rapid advance of the Church lies in the development of a strong body of voluntary workers.

The courses of Bible study were well attended: no less than 125 persons were regular attendants at the classes.

The evangelistic work of the Conference was limited as heretofore to the youth in the Schools. Addresses were made in eleven of these institutions. What the result of these meetings were has yet to be reported.

The Conference was fortunate in having present throughout the meetings, the Rev. F. S. Hatch, the General Secretary of the United Society of Christian Endeavour in India, J. Campbell White Esq, Secretary of the Y. M. C. A. of Calcutta and the Rev. Mr. Zwemer of Muscat, Arabia.

The North India Conference of Christian workers is now a permanent Institution and is open to Christians of all names, both European and Indian. We would urge our Indian brethren to make it a point to attend this Conference. The course of Bible Study is alone well worth the expense.

The paper that attracted the most marked attention was that of the Rev. Dr. Griswold in which he gave a graphic account of the rise and progress of the Ahmadiya Sect under the leadership of the Messianic pretender of Qadian. This paper will soon appear in both English and Urdu. It will be published at the Ludhiana Mission Press.

A new pamphlet on the Plague will soon be published at the Mission Press, Ludhiana. It has been prepared by Dr. D. N. P. Datta, Civil Surgeon of Hoshiarpur. Dr. Datta received a gold medal for a Thesis on Plague while at the University of Edinburgh and has had extensive experience in the treatment of this terrible disease. This booklet, will appear in English, Persian Urdu and Roman Urdu. It tells how to diagnose the disease, how

to protect oneself from contagion, how to treat the disease including a prescription which any druggist can fill. Such a guide will be invaluable to the public. For particulars as to prices address the Mission Press, Ludhiana.

Some of the fallacies of Mrs. Besant have been exposed by the *Bombay Guardian* in the following language:

Among many vague statements that Mrs. Besant made at Oxford recently is the following:

Two great doctrines common to all ancient faiths, and to every faith in its early days, belong as much to the Christian and the Mussulman as to the Buddhist and the Hindoo—the two great doctrines of the evolution of the human soul by a process of successive incarnations, and the fact that these incarnations are made a changeless law.

A missionary of twenty-one years' experience in India assures us that the native Christians there will have nothing to do with the doctrine of so-called transmigration. In fact, they are only too glad to know that they do not have to pass through 87,000,000 births (or nether lives, including all sorts of animal existence), but that there is only one "re-incarnation," namely, the new birth through Christ. Even the common Hindoo greatly dreads this so-called transmigration; hence the glad tidings of but one new birth, and that spiritual, holy and eternal, is very welcome, and many of them gladly accept Christ on this account."

"Mrs. Besant also went on to say:—

In our vast Empire of India seven faiths are there battling one against the other. People send out their Christian teachers to stir up strife, and make difficulties for the civil government, and raise angry feelings that turn the hearts of Indian subjects against them because of the insults to the faith they love.

We have only to put over against this statement the testimony of the famous Lord Lawrence that "*Christian mission have done more for India than all other agencies combined.*" Christian missions in India, by what they have done, throw out a challenge to Mrs. Besant to prove her statements. Who have always been at the fore-front in education, reform, help to the famine-stricken, and in every good work? The answer is, the "Christian teacher" sent out by God's people from Great Britain, America, and elsewhere."

On June 23rd there passed from this world a man who occupied probably the highest place in the Sunday School world—B. F. Jacobs of Chicago has for 30 years stood as a leader in all movements for the expansion of the Sunday School work throughout the world. The *Indian Sunday School Journal* truly says:

"Very few Bishops, Ministers or Missionaries have won such an influence in Christian work over leaders of men as did B. F. Jacobs. This should encourage men of business in their work for God. Not six hours before the call the dying man said, "Men die, but Jesus Christ lives, and the work goes on." This sentence was indeed the fine finish of a lovely life."

It was due to Mr. Jacobs that India first secured as its I. S. S. U. Secretary the late Dr. J. L. Phillips.

"The annual rifle meeting of the 2nd Punjab (Simla) Volunteer Rifles begins on the 1st October and occupy about a fortnight."

Current Thought & Incident.

A CALL TO PRAYER.

Sunday, November 16, has been selected as a general Day of Prayer for India. Called to pray by our Lord Himself in His Command, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest," and moved alike by the condition of His church in this land, and the need of the perishing multitudes, let us give ourselves earnestly to united prayer upon this day. As we look upon the results of our labours in the past, the sins of many who bear the name of Christian, and the multitudes yet unreached, we have need to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may search us anew, and reveal any causes of weakness or failure.

Encouraged, however, by what God has wrought in answer to prayer more recently in Australia, Japan and in other lands, as well as by tokens of blessing in India itself, especially in a new spirit of prayer poured forth upon many for a spiritual awakening, let us draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace. Let us ask according to the measure of our need, with believing, importunate and preserving prayer to Him who has said, "Ask, and it shall be given you."

Will not the entire Christian community of India, both Indians and Europeans, Missionaries and Mission agents, congregations and individuals, unite in the observance of this day, both by special services by meetings for united intercession, and by private prayer, asking, according to His will,

1. For the cleansing and awakening of all Church of Christ in India.
2. For quickening and blessing of all Missions and Christian workers,
3. For the conviction and conversion of the unreached multitudes.

Signed.

K. C. Banurji, *Chairman, Indian National Council, Young Men's Christian Associations.*

Richard Barges, *General Secretary, India Sunday School Union.*

F. S. Hatch, *General Secretary, United Society of Christian Endeavour.*

J. W. Robinson, *Secretary, Indian Epworth League.*

J. Campbell White, *for the Student Volunteer Movement of India and Ceylon.*

Herbert Anderson, *Secretary Calcutta Missionary Conference.*

W. J. Chamberlain, *Secretary South India Missionary Association.*

Brenton J. Badley, *Secretary, United Missionary Conference Lucknow.*

AN ENGLISH ARAB.

In the desert east of the Suez Canal some sixteen years ago, three of England's sons were seized by a band of hostile Arabs, and after some parley were driven toward the edge of a deep ravine, where they were shot and stabbed to death. The little expedition had consisted of two English officers, and Professor E. H. Palmer, their leader, with two or three native servants.

They were there because there was war in Egypt. Arabi, who is now a prisoner in the hands of the British, had a year earlier raised a formidable rebellion, had won over many of the Bedouin Arabs of the Nile, and was trying to induce the fierce tribes of the desert of Sinai to join his standard. It was known that these tribes were wavering. If they rose, the Suez Canal would be in great danger, and there was even a possibility of the countless hordes in the desert beyond joining in the uprising and bringing about a jihad, or holy war of Mohammedans against Christians, the injurious effect of which would have been beyond all calculation.

To prevent this calamity if possible, the British government decided to send Professor Palmer upon a secret mission to these desert tribes. A few years earlier he had traveled among them and had made the acquaintance of many of the sheiks. He spoke Arabic perfectly, dressed like an Arab, and was known by the natives as the Sheik Abdullah. During the heat of summer, therefore, when even the Arab suffered from the oppressiveness of the weather, the Sheik Abdullah rode untiringly through the desert, visiting each of the tribes, and not only succeeded in preventing them from joining in the war against the government, but obtained a guarantee of the aid of fifty thousand men. This first expedition was therefore a brilliant success.

The second mission, which had so terrible an ending, was for the purpose of redeeming the promises he had made to the sheiks, and for arranging for the cooperation of the friendly tribes in the defense of the canal.

Palmer's life had been no less romantic than was his death. He had few early advantages. His father was a private schoolmaster. He himself became a city clerk, but had to give up that occupation on account of ill health. It was not until he had reached manhood that he began the study of oriental languages, in which he attained an unrivaled proficiency. He learned ten languages, each of which he spoke perfectly, like a native, and

was only forty-two years old when he died.

The first language, other than English, that he learned was Romance, the language of the gipsies. While still at school he bribed gipsies to teach him their language, and he soon began to speak it as well as they.

He had a singularly profound knowledge of many other languages. For example, it is said that he entered one day into conversation with a French soldier in Paris, who was a native Arab. After awhile the man exclaimed, "Why do you wear those clothes?"

"Why, how should I dress?" asked Palmer.

"Dress like what you are," was the indignant reply, "like a Moslem."

A story is told which illustrates the very practical use to which his knowledge was sometimes put. A burglary had been committed in Cambridge, and the burglars got off safely. The only clue was a little piece of paper with curious marks upon it. The police brought this to the man who was supposed to know all alphabets and all languages. It was a notification in "Yiddish" or "Schmu-sen," the language spoken by German and Polish Jews, to the effect that there was another robbery planned. Palmer read it and the burglars were actually caught while engaged in that robbery.

Palmer was especially attracted to the unusual and romantic. It was said, indeed, that he never heard a strange word, or a strange face, or listened to a strange thing that he did not remember. He had wonderful presence of mind, which, on one occasion, at least, saved him from almost certain death at the hands of the wild Bedouins of the desert.

He had been led astray by a treacherous gang of Arab robbers, who intended to rob and kill him. He was not ostensibly a captive at the outset, but soon found out the position of affairs. He affected at first to take no notice of the rudeness of the Arabs to him but presently their insults became pointed and unmistakable. As if he had just noticed it, he sprang up in a rage. "This to me!" he roared, and drawing a letter from his pocket, he exclaimed, as he flourished it before the robbers, "Down on your knees, you dogs, and kiss the handwriting of the Sultan!"

Down on their faces went the whole three hundred of them, utterly subdued.

He never missed an opportunity of doing a kind action, and no one held a warmer place in the affections of his friends. One who knew him well has

described him as "a scholar and student, most earnest and resolute, yet always with the heart of a boy; so great a linguist that he stood alone, yet, always modest; full of reliance in himself and his own powers, yet never vainglorious; always at work, yet always with time for leisure; the most serious man in the world when he had a purpose in view, yet the most delightful and most mirthful of companions."

Selected.

People Who Poison their Environment.

We know a number of people who complain of their fate and hard luck, and what they call their "iron" environment, who are, themselves, their worst enemies. Unconsciously they poison and devitalize the atmosphere of their surroundings by the pictures of failure which they are constantly creating in their minds. Their pessimism, exhal-ing from every pore, envelops them in a dense but invisible atmosphere, through which no ray of light or hope can enter, and yet they wonder why they do not succeed. They expect bright pictures to come from dark ones, hope from despair, cheer from gloom.

These same people would think a farmer ridiculous who should sow nettle seeds and expect them to produce wheat or corn; or one who should plant the deadly nightshade in his garden and hope to see the rose or the lily flourish on its stem. They do not seem to appreciate the fact that, everywhere in the universe, like produces like; that, whatever thought we sow, we must reap in kind; that the sour, gloomy, pessimistic seed sown in the garden of the mind must produce its own peculiar fruit. Grapes will not grow on thorns or figs on thistles.—Success.

Romantic Side of Inventions.

Three remarkable instances are known in which the Yankee boy's strick of whittling led to valuable inventions. According to a writer in the Stationary Engineer and Machinist, the elder Cunard, who was apprenticed as a lad to a Scotch ship-builder, is said to have amused himself in whittling the hulls of vessels. Occasionally he would fit one of these masts, sails and rigging complete. Tired of familiar types he would experiment with new ships, and one of these it was that attracted the attention of his master, because it would not maintain its upright position in the water. Experiments were made to ballast it, in order to give it the proper trim. The clipper like shape and

graceful long lines of the model promised great speed. Such is said to be the origin of the standard model of the Cunard and later ocean greyhounds.

Robert Livingston Stevens had grown to man's estate when he sailed from New York to Liverpool, eighty years ago. But he had not outgrown his love of whittling. In those days the passage took two months and Stephens passed many an hour, jack knife in one hand and a piece of wood in the other, brooding over a problem that had worried him—how to run a railroad without stone stringers for tracks. He wanted to get an iron rail that would "hold," and would take the place of the thin strips fastened to the chair of the roadbed. Just before he reached England his whittling revealed to him the solution of his problem, and that solution took the form of a T-rail with a broad base that could be applied direct to a solid wooden support. That T-rail is still in use on all railways of the world.

A Doctor's Dream of Heaven's Gate.

Dr. Emmons T. Mockridge, of the Philadelphia Medical Mission, relates the following: At the beginning of the American Civil War, I had visited the seminary near Alexandria, Va., and had some experience among the sentinels, where, omitting to have the password. I once came nearly losing my life, which may account for a dream that came to me, as our waking thoughts frequently follow us in our night visions. I dreamed I was walking in a procession, without power to leave it, towards a building all illuminated and of great beauty. At the entrance stood a sentinel, who demanded the password. I saw some permitted to enter, and others, not having the password, went down a steep place. My heart sank within me as I realised that I lacked the counter-sign, and must be rejected; but when I reached the sentinel, he drew me to him, and whispered in my ear, "What think ye of Christ?" My heart gave a great bound of joy as I was answered, "Chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely!" He responded, "Enter in!" At that moment to my great regret I awoke.

SPEAK THE BEST.

"Oh, speak no ill, but lenient be
To others' failings as your own;
If you're the first a fault to see,
Be not the first to make it known.
For life is but a passing day;
No lips can tell how brief the stay;
Be earnest in the work of good,
And speak of all the best we may."

MADE IN JAPAN

Telegrams.

Bombay, Sept. 26.

Dramatic and extraordinary scenes are taking place at Clapton in connection with the sect called the Agapemonites. The leader is Rev. Smyth Piggot, who states that he is the Messiah come again in the flesh. The public resentment is very strong, and has led to violent scenes. Police interference was necessary, as the excitement had almost produced a riot.

The republican conventions in eleven States have decided to support the re-election of President Roosevelt. Boss Platt was overruled in the New York convention.

Boers are trekking in large numbers to German and Portuguese territory.

Allahabad, Sept. 25.

A frontier correspondent states that the anniversary of the Amir's accession will be celebrated all over Afghanistan on the 23rd proximo. A great durbar will be held at Kabul on the 29th, when Habibullah will receive all the leading Sardars, officials and selected tribal representatives. It is expected he will then make some declaration regarding his line of policy both in the civil and military administration. Eight thousand prisoners will be released on that day.

The correspondent also states that Mir Mahomed Ali Beg, better known as Wakil Saighani, Governor of Jellalabad, was arrested on the 14th instant. The arrest was effected by a troop of cavalry sent specially from Kabul with secret orders. Ali Beg and his family have been taken to Kabul, and his property in Jellalabad, valued at a lakh of rupees, has been confiscated. The charges against him are of the usual character in Afghanistan—bribery, embezzlement of State funds. He is further alleged to have killed a Khugiani Chief.

*Allahabad, Sept. 25.

A Kashgar correspondent writing on the 30th August says: On the 2nd August, at about 8 a.m., there was a severe shock of earthquake felt in Kashgar which lasted some 100 seconds and brought down many walls and buildings. About a dozen people were killed in the town.

The seismic wave seemed to come from north to south, and the centre of the movement would appear to have been on the northern frontier of this province on Chatu Kul or perhaps in the Atbashi valley. Villages to the north of Kashgar, notably Astish, suffered a great deal. This village is completely destroyed. Some 150 people were killed and many others injured in the Astish district. The villages and towns, however, to the south of Kashgar have not suffered so severely.

Up till to-day we have had daily during the whole week light movements at irregular intervals.

It is difficult to get accurate information, but taking all the news from surrounding places together, the statement that the loss of life amounts to about 1,000 victims would not be far wrong.

No premonitory signs were observed, and the general character of the movement only differed from usual earthquakes in these parts in its intensity. The most striking phenomenon was a very pronounced rise in temperature which followed immediately and is still existing. No one in the small European colony has received any injuries, although the houses of British officials have sustained some damage.

London, Sept. 26.

Negotiations are proceeding between Britain and Siam regarding the preferential Customs duties established at Kelantan in favour of Siam against Singapore. This was a matter which was probably discussed on the occasion of Sir F. Swettenham's visit to Kelantan.

London, Sept. 26.

Roumania has suddenly prevented the departure of a hundred Jewish emigrants just starting for America, thereby increasing the prevalent misery.

London, Sept. 28.

The recent tour by Lord Milner through the Transvaal has had highly beneficial results and removed many erroneous impressions on the part of the Dutch, who are generally resigned to British rule and anxious to do their best for the country.

Lord Milner will probably undertake other similar tours.

London, Sept. 27.

The Prince of Bulgaria, and the Grand Duke Nicholas representing the Tsar, have arrived at the Shipka Pass to attend the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Liberation of Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke and the consecration of the costly Russian Orthodox church commemorative of the Russian defence of the Pass. The celebration is accompanied by a great mobilisation of Bulgarian troops.

London, Sept. 27.

A cyclone and tidal wave have devastated Modica in Sicily. A hundred bodies have been recovered. Numbers are missing.

Catania has also been visited, but less severely.

Etna shows signs of activity. The Stromboli volcano is active.

London, Sept. 28.

Three hundred lives were lost at Modica. Corpses are still lying in the churches; the cemeteries being waves of mud interment is impossible. Many bodies swept into the sea are being thrown up along the coast.

The storm is still raging in Sicily.

London, Sept. 29.

Vodena, the scene of the fighting mentioned yesterday evening, is the centre of a district of the province of Monastir, where, according to yesterday's Vienna *Neue Freie Presse*, all the Bulgarian villages have risen attacking the Turkish villages.

Altogether thirty-eight battalions of Turkish reserves have been called out, including twelve at Uskub, for the purpose, according to the official statement, of securing order and restraining turbulent elements.

London, Sept. 29.

During a typhoon a wave overwhelmed a district near Yokohama and 500 people are reported to have been drowned. Many houses have been destroyed.

Calcutta, Sept. 30.

London, September 29.—The correspondent of the *Times* at Berlin makes the announcement that the reflecting section of public opinion in Germany is growing tired of the Boer appeals.—*Englishman Special*.

London, Sept. 30.

Information from Boer sources states that the Kaiser has promised an audience to the Generals. It is also hoped to secure a reception by the Tsar.

The newspapers hesitate to believe the Berlin report that the Kaiser will receive the Boer Generals, but express extreme indignation at the idea.

London, Sept. 30.

The Macedonian Committee at Sofia formally announces the outbreak of insurrection in Macedonia, headed by Colonel Jankoff, formerly of the Bulgarian army, who commands 3,000 troops, divided into several bands. A provisional Government has been formed.

London, Sept. 30.

Cholera is causing terrible ravages in the Philippines. A thousand cases occur daily in some towns. The people are fleeing to the mountains, leaving the dead unburied, and dying uncared for.

Allahabad, Sept. 1.

The *Pioneer's* frontier correspondent states that Muhammad Hussein Khan Effendi, who recently visited Peshawar on a mission to collect funds for the Hedjaz Railway, has failed to enlist the sympathy of Amir Habibulla in the project. His letters to Kabul appealing for contributions remained unanswered, and he has now left Peshawar.

Other frontier news is to the effect that Colonel Nur Muhammad, commanding the Artillery at Jellalabad, has been imprisoned and his family sent to Turkestan. He is said to have been detected in holding correspondence with Afghan fugitives in India. The Amir has notified that such of his subjects as wish to leave the country may do so on obtaining a passport, but he will not permit secret correspondence with any fugitive in India or elsewhere.

The Afghan Governor of Khost has received an order from Kabul that no turbulent tribesmen, such as Waziris, are to be allowed to cross the frontier from the direction of India.

Chikhal, the notorious freebooter, who used to raid the Kurram, has been in Khost for some months now with a well-armed following. Complaints against him have reached the Amir's ears, and the Governor has been directed to keep him under surveillance pending further orders.

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